



LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES

February 8, 2012

BOARD PRESENT: Amir, Brodsky, Christman, Cotter, Dickerson, Jewell, J. Lewis, O. Lewis, Neuman, Ram, Watts

STAFF PRESENT: B. Parker Hamilton, Director; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

GUESTS: Ann Johnson (Kensington Park LAC Chair), Ed Hsu (Quince Orchard LAC Chair), Frank Alrichter (White Oak LAC Chair)

The Library Board meeting was convened by Chair Lewis at 7:10 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS:

- Chair Lewis welcomed Library Advisory Committee Chairs.
- New member, Florence Jewell, was welcomed to the Library Board.
- Board members, Library Advisory Committee Chairs and Library Staff self-introduced.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Minutes from the January 8, 2011 meeting were approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

CHAIR'S UPDATE:

- The Brainstorming II meeting is scheduled for February 9, 7:00 p.m., at the Marilyn J. Praisner Library.
 - This is a planning meeting with the Library Board, LACs and FOL chapters.
 - The first meeting was held to review of past accomplishments and to jointly plan how to move forward this year. Many good ideas were formulated at this meeting.

- The second meeting will be very concrete. The talking points will be finalized, an update on the status of the t-shirts will be sought, and the slogan and petition will be finalized.
- It was suggested that the new slogan and t-shirts be introduced via a flash mob at the Council Office Building (COB); the press would be invited.
- All are encouraged to use the slogan whenever possible.
- LAC chairs should encourage their members to participate in the brainstorming session. Those who cannot attend may email any ideas to Jill Lewis.
- On February 2, 2012, Jill Lewis, Otto Lewis and Bruce Goldensohn (Gaithersburg LAC) met with Councilmember Craig Rice.
 - Mr. Rice has been appointed by Council President Berliner as the lead for Public Libraries.
 - The meeting was to discuss how the Board and Councilmember Rice could work together.
 - The discussion included:
 - Libraries having both short and long term plans to help with the current losses and to plan for the future.
 - The message should include why libraries matter.
 - Stress that libraries represent everyone; one place that everybody needs and uses.
 - The importance of getting the Council members into the branches. Mr. Rice stated that he would encourage other Council members.
 - Councilmember Rice serves on the Health and Human Services (HHS) Committee with Councilmembers Leventhal and Navarro.
- The Board visits with the Council members will be rescheduled until after all budget information is known.
- The Council breakfast has also been cancelled. The visits and tours should give members sufficient opportunity to speak with Council members.
- The Council members are still being contacted regarding the branch tours.
 - Councilmember Riemer toured Wheaton and Councilmember Leventhal toured Davis. Councilmember Floreen is scheduled to tour Bethesda at the end of February. Councilmember Andrews rescheduled his tour of Rockville Memorial from today until March 14, 2012.
 - It is more effective to have the Council member visit a library in his/her district.
 - Invitations will be sent jointly from the Board Chair and a community member and/or LAC Chair. Chair Lewis will communicate this to the LAC chairs.
 - After the tour, a thank you letter from the Board will be sent with a copy to Council President Berliner and the HHS Committee members.
 - The scheduled tour dates will be communicated to all Board members.
- Chair Lewis will be meeting with a few members of the Montgomery County Chapter of the League of Women Voters (LWV).
 - LWV is specifically interested in working with the Library Advisory Committees.
 - The meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 13, 2012 at MCPL's Central Administrative Offices, Board Room.
 - Dr. Lois Neuman has been invited as the Chair of the Board and LAC Activities Committee.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- Art Brodsky and others, including Director Hamilton, have successfully lobbied for the

extension of the check out period for e-books.

- E-books may now be checked out for as long as 21 days, the same as print books.
- Customers have the option of checking out the e-book for 7, 14 or 21 days.
- Dates regarding the budget:
 - Public Libraries will be before the HHS Committee regarding the CIP budget on February 15 at 3:00 p.m.; 7th Floor of the COB.
 - On March 5 at 2:00 p.m.; 7th Floor of the COB, a joint worksession with the Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee and the HHS Committee will be held regarding the Wheaton Library/Recreation Center.
 - March 8 at 2:00 p.m. has been held to continue the Libraries CIP discussion if necessary.
 - On March 15 at noon, County Executive Leggett will hold a press conference to announce his operating budget. This press conference will take place at the Executive Office Building (EOB).
- At the same time Craig Rice was named the Council lead for Libraries, Hans Riemer was named the lead for Digital Government.
 - A thank you letter will be sent to Mr. Berliner for identifying a need for that position and filling it.
- MCPL's Plans
 - The Strategic Plan (07-12), which is in its last year, and the FY12 Work Plan were shared with Board members.
 - These plans will be sent to the Agency Managers and then shared with the LAC Chairs.
 - The new Strategic Plan, which is currently being drafted, will encompass three years. Because things are ever changing in libraries, it is more practicable to have a three year plan as opposed to a five year plan.
 - The new plan will be given to the Library Policies and Practices Committee in April for review; it will then be submitted to the full Board in May.
 - The Technology Plan was just submitted to Mike Ferrara in the office of the Chief Administrative Officer and to the Acting Director for the Department of Technology Services with a copy to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.
 - Waiting to hear back from Mike Ferrara regarding next steps, since this is the Department's first technology plan.
 - The Department has exhausted all low cost/no cost options with regards to technology.
 - Rita Gale is almost completed the third draft of the Facilities Plan. It should be finished within the next few weeks.
 - The short term plan is to complete any outstanding work on the long term plan.
 - The Work Plan has been developed every year since Parker Hamilton was appointed director of MCPL.
 - Each year, the information for the State of the Library Report and the Report to the Community is taken from the work plans.
 - Board members can pull talking points from the plans that may be shared in appropriate ways.
 - The original Strategic Plan and Reports to the Community from past years may also be shared when visiting Council members.
- The last meeting of the Unattended Vulnerable People in Public Places Workgroup (aka Homeless Task Force) will be held on February 16.

- Carol Legarreta, Nancy Benner, Fran Ware, Kay Bowman, Dan Beavin and Dianne Whitaker have been invited to attend.
- Happy Library Lovers' Month.

BOARD MEMBERS' REPORTS:

- Jill Lewis
 - It is very important for Director Hamilton to receive feedback from those Board members who attended and will attend the Council branch visits and the Public Budget Forums.
- Otto Lewis
 - Attended the Public Budget Forum at East County. During which, Mr. Leggett stated:
 - The County's budget will be impacted if the teachers' pensions are shifted to the counties by the State.
 - He wants to maintain the County's AAA bond rating.
 - "I am not closing libraries."
 - Attended the tour of the Davis Library with Councilmember Leventhal.
 - There was a good turnout which included the Davis LAC Chair and Vice Chair; President of the Davis FOL chapter; and other LAC and FOL members.
 - The importance of online resources was addressed.
 - Mr. Leventhal noted the lack of electrical outlets and small enclosed meeting rooms, and that the Children's area was not especially stimulating and the bookshelves were cramped.
 - Davis Branch Manager Joseph Eagan talked about the bubbling paint and mildew on the walls caused by leaks. The downstairs is not being used due to mold and mildew.
 - Mr. Leventhal stated that there is definitely a need to do something about the moisture problem in the Davis Library and that Director Parker Hamilton and her staff need to prioritize this in the budget. Other county buildings also have these issues.
 - There was an enhanced cleaning fund that was originally \$450K, and is now \$270K. The Department requested that County Executive Leggett make this fund for basic needs. The buildings are now being vacuumed a few days a week, where other County buildings are not. Cleaning has been prioritized. [Parker Hamilton]
 - Mr. Leventhal has a Takoma Park library card, but not an MCPL card.
- Art Brodsky
 - Council had their first hearing on the Capital Improvements Program (CIP); Art Brodsky, Paulette Dickerson and Frank Joseph (President of the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Inc.) testified.
 - Two points were made during Art Brodsky's testimony.
 - In the CIP, most of the work on libraries has been pushed off on the theory that MCPL did not have a strategic plan or a technology plan sufficient to support any design and planning work.
 - Two projects in particular warrant special attention.

- The Wheaton library is the gateway to the Wheaton business district, and the building is in need of repair and updating, as it is one of the busiest branches in the system. The people of Wheaton deserve a recreation center. The Recreation Center across from the library has seen better decades. The Wheaton community has been waiting a long time for a recreation center and a new library.
 - The Davis Library is in a bad way, particularly on the ground floor, where there are problems with mold and with damp and unhealthy air in the meeting rooms. Air quality issues have been going on since 1999 at this library. The CIP took note of "chronic air quality problems." Starting work in FY 17 on the project does disservice to the community.
- The testimony of Frank Joseph focused on the timely completions of the new library buildings and those undergoing renovations. He also stressed the need for fully operational branches for the Wheaton and Davis Communities – no more patch work.
- Paulette Dickerson
 - There is a community group trying to ensure that the small businesses in Wheaton do not disappear.
 - Testimony before Council included:
 - The last time there was major renovation of the Wheaton Library building was almost thirty years ago.
 - The Davis Library building has not been renovated since 1986.
 - Quote from the atrium of the Rockville Memorial Library: *Information is the currency of democracy [Thomas Jefferson]*.
- Lois Neuman
 - Attended the County Executive's public budget forums in Bethesda and Germantown. There was lots of orange. Damascus, Quince Orchard and Gaithersburg were all represented at the Germantown forum.
 - Mr. Leggett stated that the Library budget had been cut as far as it could be cut without sacrificing quality. Mr. Leggett is very educated about the issues pertaining to libraries.
 - Both forums were well attended.
- Andrea Christman
 - This is the time period that Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is looking at trials for online databases.
 - Media specialists are reviewing e-Tech.
 - Nothing will be purchased this year because the platform is not there to support any new databases.
 - Content has to be evaluated and filtered.
 - MCPS is opening its 202 school which is now being called DCC #29 (Down-county Consortium) Elementary School. This school will be pulling from Oakland Terrace. The 203 school is a Montessori-based charter school. The school, which is the first charter school to be accepted by MCPS, will serve children from pre-kindergarten through third grade.
 - This is the third year MCPS Curriculum 2.0 is being used in the elementary schools (K-2). This curriculum is built around developing students' critical and creative thinking skills by tying together subjects and core content areas through

common questions. Teachers can upload sample lesson plans and resources. They can also rate others' lesson plans.

- Common Core State Standards Initiative is impacting math; instead of memorizing numbers and formulas, students have to explain the process. Proponents believe that students will not be college-ready until they can dig into complex text which offers a greater challenge and deeper study (science and technology curriculum).
 - This is challenging for libraries to try to match the book with the interest and reading levels.
- Standardized testing is high stakes, every year has to be better than the past years. Continuation of “no child left behind.” Now there is “Race to the Top.”

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Legislative and Public Affairs Committee
 - After the brainstorming session on February 9, the Committee will begin working on dates for the Council visits.
- Board and LAC Activities Committee
 - The Committee is working to pair active LACs with LACs that are less active.
 - The LACs can learn from each other, while still maintaining their individual identities.
 - The Committee members will communicate electronically while working with the pairs, and then get together in May to discuss the outcomes.
 - Director Hamilton will talk to the Branch Managers who will be involved in the pairing process regarding what the Board is trying to achieve.
 - The announcement for the LAC awards should be sent out. The deadline for the submission of nominations is usually April 1.
 - There was discussion regarding the significance of the awards and the number of LACs that participate each year. The Board members agreed there was value in recognizing the work of the LACs. As last year, there will be two awards – the Ablard Award and the Member(s) of the Year Award.
 - There are many activities in the Work Plan that pertain to the LACs. Usually the LACs only feel active during budget time. There is information in the LAC Handbook about the roles of the LACs. LACs exist to provide feedback from the community to the Board, the Director and Branch Managers. The Board liaisons need to let the LACs know what their roles entail.
 - Mentoring of new Board members is in place.

NEW BUSINESS:

- The Boards, Committees, and Commissions (BCCs) Annual Meeting with the County Executive will be held on February 23, 2012. The meeting will take place in the Executive Office Building (EOB) Cafeteria at 7:00 PM. Art Brodsky, Jill Lewis and Otto Lewis are scheduled to attend.

LAC INFORMATION/LAC UPDATES:

- **LAC Applications**

The LAC member nomination was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Frank Alrichter
 - Wished the brainstorming sessions had been much earlier; LAC members went into the budget forums without talking points.
 - Facilities such as White Oak, which is running a very old heating system, should be scheduled for small scale renovations.
- Director Hamilton stated that in the new facilities plan, language has been added to express the need for mini-renovations on existing facilities.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

B. Parker Hamilton